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Chairman: Mr. Ashe ..... (Antigua and Barbuda)
Acting Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Saha

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 145: Financing of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (A/60/176 and Corr.1 and A/60/386)

1. **Ms. Pollard** (Director of the Peacekeeping Financing Division) introduced the report of the Secretary-General on the revised budget for the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) for the period from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006 (A/60/176 and Corr.1). The report should be read in conjunction with the report of the Secretary-General on the budget for MINUSTAH, of 18 March 2005 (A/59/745), which contained the Mission's budget for the period from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006 and expenditure report for the period from 1 May to 30 June 2004.

2. The additional or revised indicators of achievements and planned outputs for the budget period were reflected in components 1 to 5 of section 1 of the report. The proposed revised budget amounted to $518.8 million, which represented an increase of $48.8 million, in addition to the amount of $470 million appropriated by the General Assembly for the current financial period in its resolution 59/17 B of 22 June 2005. The additional resource requirements were mainly with respect to the military and police personnel, the additional requirements for which resulted from the phased deployment of 750 additional infantry personnel, 50 additional staff officers, 150 additional civilian police and 1 additional formed police unit of 125 police personnel. The cost estimates had been adjusted by delayed deployment factors of 2 per cent for the military contingents and 5 per cent for the civilian police.

3. Under facilities and infrastructure, additional requirements were proposed owing to the need to establish 12 new sites for the additional military and police personnel and to refurbish 50 new sites where the additional civilian police would be co-located with the Haitian National Police.

4. Under ground transportation the increased requirements were due to the need to procure, operate and maintain 82 additional general purpose 4x4 vehicles and 4 additional light buses needed for patrols by the additional civilian police and transport of the additional civilian and police personnel.

5. The temporary staffing requirements included 65 additional temporary posts, 17 international and 30 national, which were budgeted under general temporary assistance, as well as 18 United Nations Volunteers. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly in respect of the financing of the Mission were set out in paragraph 23 of the budget report.

6. **Mr. Saha** (Acting Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/60/386), said that the revised budget of MINUSTAH should be read in conjunction with the report of the Secretary-General on the initial estimates for 2005/06 (A/59/745). In its related report on the initial estimates (A/59/736/Add.13), the Advisory Committee had drawn attention to a number of its concerns with regard to results-based budgeting, organizational and staffing structure and operational costs. The Advisory Committee's recommendations had been endorsed by the General Assembly. The current revised budget did not reflect action taken on any of the concerns raised by the Advisory Committee, which had been assured that its concerns would be addressed in the next budget submission for MINUSTAH. Had the Administration been able to fully implement the measures called for by the General Assembly, the revised estimates of requirements might well have been reduced.

7. The Advisory Committee was recommending a total reduction of $2.3 million for the revised budget for the reasons stated in paragraphs 18, 21 and 22 of its report, which could be fully substantiated on their own merits. Given that the total revised budget being recommended by the Advisory Committee was in excess of $516 million and taking into account the expenditure pattern of MINUSTAH as at 31 August 2005, it should not be difficult for the Mission to effect those reductions, especially in view of the flexibility available to the Secretary-General to administer the budget as one expenditure line.

8. **Mr. Horner** (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the acceding countries (Bulgaria and Romania), the candidate countries (Croatia and Turkey), the stabilization and association process countries and potential candidates (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), and, in addition, Iceland, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, said that, given the volatility of the situation

in Haiti and the approaching elections, the European Union was supportive of the increased United Nations presence as authorized in Security Council resolution 1608 (2005). In that context, it noted that the majority of the additional resources requested were a direct result of the temporary increase in military personnel. It noted further that the revised budget contained requests for additional civilian personnel and it fully shared the views and concerns expressed by ACABQ in that regard. The apparent lack of implementation of previously approved recommendations combined with a relatively high vacancy rate called into question whether an accurate needs assessment of staffing had indeed been carried out by the Mission before the submission of yet another request for additional civilian staff.

9. During the post-election period, taking due account of the situation on the ground, the European Union expected to see a progressive reduction in the Mission's personnel and financial requirements. It also expected its budget for the 2006/07 period to be based on soundly justified proposals following a comprehensive review of staffing requirements.

10. **Mr. Torres Lépori** (Argentina) speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, said that Haiti was the only Latin American issue on the agenda of the Security Council and the members of the Group were therefore keenly interested in its consideration. Peace and reconstruction of their economy, State and society were a challenge for Haitians, who should be given an opportunity to define their political future by their own means and in accordance with the popular will. The Rio Group hoped to be able to contribute to the development of Haiti and to the achievement of stability and social justice. It commended the Organization of American States (OAS) for the technical assistance it was providing during the electoral registration phase and the Economic and Social Council for the work being done by its Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti.

11. Progress in economic development was of fundamental importance to the establishment of a stable environment and a political dialogue in Haiti and the holding of fair, transparent, credible and inclusive elections to enable the country to have a Government with sufficient legitimacy to address the urgent demands of Haitian society was a high priority. In that spirit, the countries of the Rio Group would participate actively in the informal negotiations of the Fifth Committee on the revised budget of MINUSTAH for the period 2005/06.

12. **Ms. Bethel** (Bahamas), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that Haiti was of major interest to the Caribbean region. Because of the circumstances of Haiti's economy and national politics, the region faced increased pressure from the threat of instability and it was therefore incumbent upon all the countries of the region and on the United Nations to do everything possible to help resolve the situation in Haiti in order to restore peace and security and to further the constitutional process of that country.

13. Haiti was at a critical juncture and while responsibility to ensure the country's progress lay primarily with its leadership and people, the sustained assistance of the international community, through MINUSTAH, was indispensable for progress. The Caribbean Community therefore welcomed the decision of the Security Council to extend the mandate of MINUSTAH until 15 February 2006 and to authorize increases in personnel. That decision had necessitated the revised budget contained in document A/60/176 and CARICOM endorsed the proposals of the Secretary-General in that regard.

14. **Mr. Sardenberg** (Brazil) commended MINUSTAH on the implementation of its mandate as defined by the Security Council. The Mission had an essential role to play in creating a secure environment for the long-term reconstruction effort. It was clear, however, that there could be no purely military solution to the Haitian crisis and it was of paramount importance to tackle the root causes of its conflicts. Adequate measures were needed to enhance progress towards creation of a safe environment, promotion of a dialogue among the political actors, and social, institutional and economic reconstruction.

15. Although security conditions in Haiti had improved considerably, the threat posed by certain illegal armed groups in various areas of the capital should not be minimized. The success that had been achieved thus far by the troops of MINUSTAH in Haiti should be linked to actions in support of the Haitian population in the poorer areas of the capital. The international donor community should take full responsibility and disburse the pledged funds required to finance Haiti's long-term recovery, within a well-structured framework of cooperation. Within the limits of its possibilities, his own country was assisting the

Haitian people and was engaged in several bilateral projects in various areas, such as agriculture, reforestation, health, garbage collection and food security, all of which were priority areas identified by the Transitional Government. It was imperative to respond to the growing disenchantment and disillusionment of the Haitian population with the political process and to restore hope. Implementation of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes, and of quick impact projects should therefore be expedited in order to reduce social pressures and enhance the image of the United Nations in the country. They were also essential to ensuring the success of the electoral process.

16. The Mission's capacity to implement quick impact projects should be reinforced when the Brazilian Engineering Company that had been deployed in Haiti became fully operational. The Company's diversified capabilities included the construction of roads and bridges, the drilling of wells and other engineering tasks.

17. Elections should be perceived as the beginning of a new phase in Haiti and it was therefore essential for MINUSTAH to be provided with all the financial and budgetary resources it needed to carry out the mandate entrusted to it by the relevant Security Council resolutions.

18. **Ms. Lock** (South Africa) said that her delegation wished to align itself with the statements made by the representatives of Argentina and the Bahamas on behalf of the Rio Group and CARICOM, respectively, and by the representative of Brazil. Noting that the General Assembly had approved the budget for MINUSTAH for the current financial period only four months earlier, she urged the Committee to focus on the proposed revisions to the budget rather than reopen issues on which agreement had already been reached. The peacekeeping operation was at a crucial stage, and it was therefore imperative for the General Assembly to ensure that MINUSTAH had the necessary financial and human resources to successfully carry out its mandate.

19. In the light of the delayed implementation of the DDR programme, the Advisory Committee recommended in paragraph 22 of its report (A/60/386) that a reduction of $1.1 million should be applied to the revised budget for MINUSTAH. Her delegation wished to know what impact the proposed reduction would have, if any, on that crucial aspect of the Mission's mandate and what the rationale for the recommendation was, given that savings of that nature would normally be reflected in the context of the performance report. The Secretary-General had recently informed the Security Council that the security situation in Haiti would remain uncertain unless real progress could be achieved in the DDR programme, yet there was a funding gap for the programme in the amount of $15 million. She trusted that every effort would be made to secure the necessary funding and to improve the disbursement of funds pledged through the Interim Cooperation Framework. Lastly, she paid tribute to the sacrifice of those who had lost their lives while serving in the Mission.

20. **Mr. Yáñez** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) reaffirmed his Government's commitment to the Charter of the United Nations, the legislative mandates of the General Assembly and their related financial implications. Financial resources were essential to enable MINUSTAH to fulfil the mandates established by Security Council resolutions 1542 (2004) and 1608 (2005). Despite his Government's reservations on the most recent political crisis in Haiti, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela had strong bonds of friendship with the Haitian people and could not ignore their suffering. It had contributed substantially in both cash and kind to assist Haiti and was currently studying the possibility of an agreement for the sale of fuel on preferential terms.

21. He hoped that MINUSTAH would contribute to the restoration of democratic institutions and to the promotion of the economic and social development of the Haitian people and that it would continue to act in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

22. Any international initiative to resolve the current crisis in Haiti should not be to the detriment of the right of the people of Haiti to decide on their own political and social institutions and the means of ensuring development to overcome poverty. It was the duty of the international community to ensure the transparency of the electoral process in Haiti and to respect the need for people to decide on their own political and social institutions.

23. **Mr. Kozaki** (Japan) expressed concern that the revised budget for the Mission did not address the Advisory Committee's previous observations and recommendations. Recommendations of ACABQ, as

approved by the General Assembly, and General Assembly resolutions on individual missions and cross-cutting issues should be implemented without delay. In that connection, his delegation wished to be informed about the progress made in resolving the management problems in the Mission, as requested by the Assembly in its resolution 59/17 B.

24. The Secretariat should indicate the justification for the proposal to contract 85 additional interpreters/translators. That would constitute an increase of 63 per cent, compared with increases of only 10 to 20 per cent and 3 to 10 per cent in the numbers of military and police personnel and civilian personnel, respectively. The Security Council, in its resolution 1608 (2005), had approved a temporary increase in the Mission's strength during the electoral period and subsequent political transition, yet the additional provision for the 85 interpreters/translators, for example, was based on the requirements for the full 12 months during the financial period 2005/06. His delegation would welcome clarification concerning the basis for the budget proposals, including the assumed duration of the temporary increase. Lastly, it wished to emphasize that an expeditious reduction in the Mission's strength would be necessary once the objectives of the current expansion had been achieved.

25. **Ms. Udo** (Nigeria) said that the Committee, having only just concluded its consideration of the budget for MINUSTAH, could dispense with another round of scrutiny of the same issues. The revised budget had been submitted in response to Security Council resolution 1608 (2005), by which the Council had extended the Mission's mandate and approved significant temporary increases in the numbers of military and civilian police personnel. The Secretary-General was therefore to be commended for keeping the additional resources requested to a bare minimum. It would be helpful to know what progress the Mission was making in implementing its objectives, and she trusted that that would be reflected in the performance report. Noting that the Advisory Committee recommended a reduction of $2.3 million in the revised budget for MINUSTAH, based in part on higher than anticipated delayed deployment factors for military and civilian police personnel, she asked what impact such a reduction would have on the Mission's activities and how the Secretariat could account for the high vacancy rates in MINUSTAH, notwithstanding the maintenance by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of a roster of qualified, easily deployable personnel.

26. **Ms. Pollard** (Director of the Peacekeeping Financing Division) said that the Administration took very seriously the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, as approved by the General Assembly. A number of recommendations had been made by ACABQ concerning the structure of the Mission. However, given the brief time that had elapsed since the adoption of those recommendations by the Assembly, it had not been possible to review them all and ensure that they were reflected in the revised budget. However, the budget for the Mission for 2006/07 would take full account of the relevant recommendations. She wished to assure the Committee that a rigorous review had been conducted of the Mission's proposals for additional civilian personnel to support the increases in the military and civilian police components authorized by the Security Council and that the request made in the revised budget represented the bare minimum.

27. She would provide updated information on the situation with respect to the DDR programme in informal consultations. While the Advisory Committee had recommended that a reduction should be applied to the revised budget for MINUSTAH owing to the delayed implementation of the programme, if the Mission were in a position to begin implementation in the near future, the Administration would use its flexibility in managing the Mission budget as a whole to refocus resources towards that important aspect of the Mission's mandate, so as to ensure that expenditure was at the level approved by the General Assembly in June 2005.

28. While there had been some slippage in the deployment of military and civilian police personnel in the first three months of the current financial period, she was pleased to report that deployment was now back on track. In addition, the vacancy rate for international staff had been reduced from 14.2 per cent as at 31 August 2005 to 8.2 per cent, compared with a budgeted rate of 10 per cent. The proposal to contract additional interpreters/translators had been made in response to repeated requests by both the military and police components, which, owing to the nature of their operations, had frequent and lengthy interactions with the civilian population, most of whom spoke Creole.

29. With regard to the basis for the budget proposals, when the Security Council authorized an increase in mission strength, it was standard practice to make provision for the mission based on the requirements for the remainder of the financial period. Accordingly, the Administration had budgeted for the continuation of MINUSTAH until 30 June 2006. At the end of the mandate period on 15 February 2006, it would become clear, depending on the Security Council's decision, whether the balance of the resources would be required. In that connection, she noted that the Council, in its resolution 1608 (2005), had requested the Secretary-General to devise, in a timely manner, a progressive drawdown strategy of the MINUSTAH force levels for the post-election period, in accordance with the situation on the ground. She would respond to the other points raised in informal consultations.

30. **Mr. Saha** (Acting Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 22 of its report (A/60/386) was a technical adjustment. Taking into account the Mission's expenditure pattern in the first three months of the current financial period, it should not be difficult for the Mission to absorb the reduction, particularly given the Secretary-General's flexibility in administering the Mission budget as a whole. He would elaborate further on the matter in informal consultations.

Agenda item 130: Joint Inspection Unit (*continued*) (A/60/34)

31. **Ms. Shah** (United States of America) said that the United States was mindful of its obligations as a host country to the United Nations. Every effort was made to ensure the timely issuance of visas to United Nations officials travelling to the United States on official business. In the light of increased security concerns following the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, her Government would urge all applicants for United States visas to apply as early as possible, so that travel would not be delayed. They should allow about 15 to 20 working days for processing of their applications.

32. **Mr. Berti Oliva** (Cuba) said that his delegation wished to be informed further, in informal consultations, about the situation with respect to the issuance of United States visas, given the new security measures in place. He hoped that host countries would not impede the work of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU).

33. **Mr. Tal** (Jordan) said that his delegation attached great importance to oversight in the United Nations, which helped to ensure that the Organization's valuable resources were used as efficiently, effectively and transparently as possible. It welcomed the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (A/60/34) and the progress made by the Unit since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 59/267. JIU reform was a continuous process. Thus, while his delegation welcomed the adoption of a common methodology for conducting the management assessment exercise, the consolidation of results-based management in the United Nations and the use of benchmarks, it believed that more emphasis should be placed on follow-up mechanisms. The Unit should, inter alia, ensure that specific information was available on the efforts taken to implement its recommendations. The introduction of quantitative and qualitative success indicators would enable the Committee to evaluate impartially the impact of the recommendations of JIU and the depth of its analyses and management assessments. The members of the Unit should be provided with the training necessary to sharpen their skills and enhance the quality of their work. Indeed, continuous learning should be part of the culture of JIU.

34. His delegation regarded the bodies comprising the tripartite oversight mechanism, namely, the Board of Auditors, the Office of Internal Oversight Services and JIU, as complementary. There was a need for coordination and the creation of synergies between the three bodies in order to maximize the overall effectiveness of the mechanism and to strengthen accountability. In addition, there must be continuous dialogue, rather than occasional communication, so as to avoid duplication of work and ensure reciprocal learning.

35. **Mr. Gorita** (Chairman of the Joint Inspection Unit) thanked delegations for their statements. He would remain at their disposal in the informal consultations on the report of JIU to provide further clarifications or additional data, as necessary.

The meeting rose at 10.55 a.m.